of the port limits, the exercise of civil and criminal jurisdiction over the limits of the port of Cochin when it is developed, the introduction of the Cochin Port Trust Act, the working of the Cochin Public Canals and Ferries Regulation and the supply of fresh water to the port of Cochin were also considered. The final decision of the Government of India has not yet been arrived at in regard to the date from which the regular practice of ocean-going steamers entering the harbour and discharging at moorings inside the backwater should be deemed to have been established and the tripartite division of the customs revenue realised at the port of Cochin should take effect : a conference is to be held on this subject in Delhi next month.

Law's Delays Commissioner

16. Reference was made in my predecessor's opening address at the last session to the work of the Law's Delays Commissioner appointed to enquire into the question of delay in the disposal of civil cases, to suggest measures for the more speedy execution of decrees and orders issued by the courts and to examine and report upon the need for the readjustment of the territorial jurisdiction of civil courts. Rao Bahadur G. Sankara Pillai entered on his duties as Commissioner on the 22nd Meenam 1105 and practically completed the work on the 30th Tulam 1107, since which date he has kindly agreed to continue as Honorary Commissioner to see the report through the press.

Joint Stock Companies.

17. The office of the Registrar of Joint Stock Compaines, which was being held by Mr. K. Venkata Rao, Director of Registration, was, on his retirement, attached to the Registrar of Co-operative Societies. The number of companies registered during 1106 was 40 against 86 in the previous year, thus reflecting the depression in business conditions. A remarkable feature of the first six months of the current year has been the rush in the registration of what are locally known as free insurance companies. The first indigenous insurance company was registered in 1105; twelve such concerns were registered in 1106; and of the fifty-four companies registered since the beginning of 1107, as many as forty-two are insurance companies. Insurance, unlike other business, requires little or no capital and the smallness of the premia or subscriptions levied makes the new ventures attractive to the people at large. These companies do not insure lives on medical certificates but on benefit funds offering to pay bonus on the happening of certain contingencies when calls would also be made on the subscribers. As the concerns are private companies, the Registrar's control over them under the Travancore Companies Regulation, I of 1092, is negligible and the time seems to have arrived to undertake legislation on the lines of the Insurance Acts in force in British India.

Public Works.

18. The financial situation necessitated a curtailment in the programme of new works in 1106 and the expenditure on ordinary public works charged to revenue amounted only to Rs. 39·16 lakhs against

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Rs. 42·68 lakhs in 1105. The expenditure on communications represented 72 per cent. of the gross outlay on works and repairs under all service heads. Forty-five miles of road were newly opened and 412 miles improved. The total length of communications maintained in 1106 was 5,118 miles against 3,822 miles in 1105. The Neriamangalam-Pallivasal road, on which an expenditure of Rs. 13·46 lakhs has been incurred, was opened for traffic on the 12th Meenam 1106. The construction of a bridge at Neriamangalam across the Periyar river was sanctioned at an approximate cost of Rs. 3 lakhs, and like the Neendakara bridge, the undertaking will be treated as a capital work not charged to revenue. The expenditure on buildings was in accordance with the declared policy of Government, kept down. Under capital works, an expenditure of Rs. 7·70 lakhs was incurred on the Trivandrum Water Works, thus raising the total outlay on the Scheme till the end of 1106 to Rs. 25·53 lakhs; and the total outlay on the Trivandrum Electric Supply and Telephone Schemes at the end of the year stood at Rs. 6·13 lakhs, of which Rs. 1·07 lakhs was spent in 1106. Judged by the rate of progress hitherto attained in the construction of new roads, bridges, etc., it was found that the working out of the recommendations already made by the Road Boards would take some years, and it has therefore been decided not to hold any meetings of the Boards in 1107. Government have not been slow to realise the unwisdom of continuing the present policy of constructing masonry drains in various parts of the Capital without any regard to the ultimate disposal of the sewage and the necessity to devise a comprehensive drainage scheme for the whole of Trivandrum by the time the protected water supply scheme becomes an accomplished fact. It is proposed to conduct an investigation for the purpose of examining fully such a scheme; and though it may not be possible to undertake the entire scheme in the immediate future, the scheme itself will be drawn up so that any partial scheme for the town as a whole or any detailed scheme for a particular area can be designed and carried out so as to fit in with the complete drainage scheme of the town which must sooner or later be carried cut. The Ryots' Roads Rules have been suitably revised in order to make them more attractive to the people who are willing to open village roads and hand them over to the Public Works Department after completion for maintenance. The Government of India have been approached for an allotment out of the Road Fund Reserve created from the duty on petrol, with a view to the construction of bridges at Alwaye, Murinjapuzha and Poottotta.

Minor Irrigation.

19. The report of the Minor Irrigation Committee appointed in March 1930 was received in October 1931. The report has been printed and the suggestions and recommendations made therein are under the consideration of Government. In the meantime, the restoration and efficient maintenance of protective irrigation works has not been neglected.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly